



River Currents



General Bill Fulton Asst/Div Commander 1968

Commodore Wade C Wells ComRivFlotOne

A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

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SPRING 2013

From the Galley

Hope this finds everyone doing well and okay and you all had a nice holiday season and 2012 treated you well. I hope 2013 will be a good year also for the association and its brothers and sisters. We did lose a few members and their spouses in 2012, which is to be expected as we all are aging into our golden years. But we will always remember those we have lost over the years. The MRFA will be 21 years old this year. It sometimes seems like it was only yesterday a few of us met in Hickory, North Carolina, to set up and have our first reunion and became the MRFA Army and Navy team. Some folks in other associations said we would never make it as an association and gave us a couple years before we folded. Well we're still here although we might not be as young as we once were, our hair is graying, we gained a little more weight around the middle, and it seems we may even be getting a little shorter then we once were. But we proved a lot of folks wrong; we're still here and as an association we're doing well.

In 2012 we had a gathering of the troops in San Diego that went over great. We had our yearly gathering on Vets Day in Washington, DC. We picked up some new members. I'm looking for and hoping 2013 will be another great year for us as an association and individually as well. I hope everyone enjoys good health in your golden years.

We have a great reunion planned for this year and we're looking for a good turnout. There is reunion info in this issue of *River Currents* and on our excellent web site www.mrfa.org. Please don't wait until the last minute to make your reservations; rooms are going faster than usual. The Indianapolis Marriott East will be new to us all. So far they have given us everything we have asked for. Some have asked about the food in the hotel. I give it a 4.0 for hotel food; it's great as well as the service. Be sure you dress comfortably; the hotel is rather large so wear comfortable shoes. Some have been asking about my health. I have had a few setbacks but doing and feeling somewhat better and looking forward to seeing each and every one of you at the reunion and meeting some of you new folks. Take care of one another and have a great spring.

Albert

Keep Marching Keep Marching

Make Your Reservations for the Reunion August 28–September 1, 2013

Room Rates: Room rates are \$79 per night. These rates are good 3 days prior to the reunion and 3 days following the reunion. You can make reservations at 1-800-228-9290 or with the in-house reservation department (1-317-352-1231, ext. 1114).

complimentary transportation to and from Castleton Square Mall at a prearranged time with departure from the hotel in the morning and departure from Castleton Square Mall in the afternoon. Service will be offered on a first come, first serve basis.

Indianapolis property has 75,000 square feet of event space consisting of banquet facilities, conference/meeting rooms, a ballroom, and exhibit space. Guest parking is complimentary. Additional property amenities include gift shops/newsstands and laundry facilities. This is a smoke-free property.

Guest Rooms: Indianapolis Marriott East has 315 air-conditioned guest rooms featured with coffee/tea makers and complimentary weekday newspapers. Beds come with premium bedding. Bathrooms feature shower/tub combinations, complimentary toiletries, and hair dryers. Wired high-speed and wireless Internet access is available for a surcharge (MRFA will be exempted from this surcharge). Guest rooms offer multi-line phones with voice mail. Televisions have premium satellite channels and pay movies. Rooms also include electronic check-out and trouser presses. Guests may request refrigerators and wake-up calls. Housekeeping is available daily. Guest rooms are all non-smoking.

RVs: There are no RV hook ups. There will be parking for some RVs. One cannot stay in the RV; you must have a room in the hotel.

Notifications and Fees: The following fees and deposits are charged by the property at time of service, check-in, or check-out: (1) Pet fee, USD \$75 per pet; (2) Pet deposit: USD \$75 per stay; and (3) Buffet breakfast fee, USD \$15.95 per person (approximately). The above list may not be



The cut-off date for making reservations is July 28, 2013. When making the reservation through the reservation department, all you have to do is mention that you are with the Mobile Riverine Force Association. The reservations page is online with our "Group Code" at <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/inddt?groupCode=rivrriva&app=resvlink&fromDate=8/27/13&toDate=9/2/13>.

Note of interest: If you have any problems registering at the hotel, please contact Frank Jones. Frank prefers e-mail (frank@raffertylighting.com). You can leave a message at his home (314-822-1230). Frank will return calls or e-mails as soon as possible. Frank works a full-time job, so bear with him on answers.

Discount: The hotel will be giving us a 10% discount for all food and beverages purchased in the hotel restaurant. You have to wear your name tag when asking for this discount.

Castleton Square Mall: The hotel will provide

Location: Indianapolis Marriott East is located in Indianapolis's East neighborhood and local attractions include Indiana State Fairgrounds, Pepsi Coliseum, Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and Bankers Life Fieldhouse.

Hotel Features: Indianapolis Marriott East's restaurant serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A bar/lounge is open for drinks. Room service is available during limited hours. The hotel serves buffet breakfasts (surcharges apply). Recreational amenities include an indoor pool, a spa tub, and a fitness facility. This 3.5-star property has a business center and offers small meeting rooms, audiovisual equipment, and business services. Wireless and wired high-speed Internet access is available in public areas (surcharges apply). This

Remembering a Donut Dolly

By Darrell Plough

Albert,

This is the letter that I wrote to Donut Dollie Emily Strange, who I remembered talking to on the ship. She was also at one of the reunions and I talked to her there. She is very nice and said how much she appreciated my note and to stay in touch, which I have done a few times. I included her response. As you can see by the date, it was written back in 2005. It still, to this day brings a certain blurriness to my eyes when I read it and think about the risks those girls were taking. What a wonderful, unselfish thing they did by getting involved. I still think it's unbelievable, I can't even put it in words the appreciation I still feel!! These girls will never get the credit they so richly deserve. Thank you for considering publishing it and feel free to edit it as you see fit.

I'll make it a point to look you up in Indy next year! Everyone I keep in touch with is looking forward to the new hotel, it sounds great! Thanks again.

Darrell Plough A-3-60, Class of VN '68-69

From: Emily Strange [mailto:strange@tds.net]

Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2005 9:24 PM

To: Darrell Plough

Subject: Re: Hey Emily, I met you...

Darrell,

Your e-mail touched me and made me laugh. What a wonderful Christmas gift you have given me. I wish I had time for a proper reply but I have much to do before I leave town Friday to spend Christmas with relatives. So, for now, I will just say, "THANKS FOR THE GIFT."

Attempting to be politically correct, I would like to also say: Merry whatever and Happy New Year of the animal to be named later on a Chinese menu coming soon to a restaurant near you.

Welcome Home, my Brother. Emily

At 07:55 PM 12/20/2005 -0500, Darrell Plough wrote:

Emily,

I just received my issue of the "River Currents" and there you were! I was with the 9th Infantry Div. and stationed on the USS Benewah in '68/69 and I've got a picture of you somewhere in my archives. Not only do I recognize you from my picture but I remember your name Emily on



Emily Stranger after Running the Benewah Aground

your uniform name tag. Some weird things do stick in our minds. The article brought back a lot of very fond memories, one of which was what you said that the ships were clean and the food was great. When we were on the ships, usually only a couple days a week to let our feet dry out, we (Army) did have it great, all we had to do was eat, sleep, and read. We didn't even have to pull guard duty at night. The warm embrace and relative safety of the Benewah was always welcome and much appreciated.

If I remember right, we only saw the Donut Dollies twice but it was much better than the USO shows with the stars, because we actually got to talk informally with you, and you were not just part of a show ... You were what we certainly needed most, a touch of HOME! Now I realize what a very special group you Donut Dollies were and I have to ask you this, "Did your Mother know where you were, and what you were doing?" What got you into that? Was your brother or Dad in the service and you wanted to feel closer/help out, or just the adventure of it all? It certainly was a special time for all of us and seeing you and having a few minutes to talk to you girls was a highlight that I'm sure none of us will ever forget.

You've heard it a million times and I'll say it again, through moist eyes, "Thank You, thank you very much! My God girl, did you realize the risk you were taking?" I'm sure you girls were guarded like the national treasure you all were, but a blind unlucky mortar round has no honor. Yes, I watched the ammo dump blow, we were in the field that night and we all stayed up all



Emily at Dong Tam

night watching it. It was quite a show, even from miles away. I was only in the Army 2 years, but they were certainly memorable. I saw it written once that a combat veteran wrote of his experiences, "I'm glad I went, I don't want to do it again, but I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world." I think that pretty much sums it up too. I was one of only three people in my platoon that was not wounded and ended up the last several months being platoon Sgt., which was a major bunch of responsibility for a scared 20-year-old kid!

I've been to the reunions twice in Kentucky; someone found my name and sent me an e-mail, so I went. It was great! It was great seeing some of the guys that I was with for only a year or less, but now they are some of my most valued friends. Some of us now keep in touch regularly via e-mail, it's so easy. I was at the reunion this year but didn't know you were there or didn't make the connection. I hope you will be at the 2007 reunion at Indianapolis, I'll find that picture and have a copy made for you, and I want you to autograph my copy.

There are a thousand or more trained killer/bashful little boys that fell in love with you, and I'm extremely proud to say that I am one of them! This is one issue of *River Currents* that will be kept and read many times!

Another question, if you had to do it all over again, would your uniform be skirts or slacks? I know how thousands of bashful little boys would vote!

Thanks again. **Darrell Plough Sgt, A 3/60 9th Infantry Div VN Class of '68/69**

Mortar Shell Left from Vietnam War Explodes, Kills 4 Children; 5 Others Injured

Published December 2, 2012, Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam—A mortar shell left from the Vietnam War has exploded in a southern village, killing four children and seriously injuring five other people.

Hieu Nghia village official Le Van Giang says three children aged 4 to

11 died at the scene Sunday afternoon and a 6-year-old boy died at the hospital. The blast seriously injured two other children and three men.

Giang said the shell exploded when the children who found the shell from bamboo brush were playing with it. A villager found the

shell five years ago when dredging a canal.

The village in Vinh Long province was a communist stronghold during the war.

Vietnamese government figures show unexploded ordnance have killed more than 42,000 people since the war ended in 1975.

“War is cruelty. There's no use trying to reform it, the crueller it is the sooner it will be over.”

--William Tecumseh Sherman

MRF Summary Report – Dec 1967

Mobile River Force Summary

ComRivFlotOne/ComRivSupprn—Seven Command History

(Taken from Don Blankenship River Vet Web Site)

Capt Robert S. Salzer relieved Capt Wade C. Wells of ComRivFlotOne/ComSupprn Seven/CTF-117 on 2 December aboard USS Benewah (APB-35). General Westmorland presented Capt Wells with the Distinguished Service Medal for his services in organizing and leading the MRF. In addition, Brigadier General Thanh, ARVN 7th Infantry Division Commander, presented Capt Wells with the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with palm for his participation as Commander Task Force 117 during Operation CORONADO II from 29 July to 4 August 1967.

Phased Operation CORONADO IX continued during the reporting period, with one operation conducted in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong Provinces during the period 4-6 December.

Movement from Dong Tam to the objective area commenced during the night of 3 December when the barge mounted artillery accompanied by elements of RAD 92, got underway for the Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPS) 30 N.M. up river. The artillery was followed by RAD 112/5th Infantry Battalion VNM, RAD 111/3rd/47th Infantry Battalion, and RAD 91/4th/47th Infantry Battalion, consecutively.

RAD 112 fought its way through one B-40/RPG-7 ambush and landed the VNM Battalion under fire at 040800 on the upper Rach Ruong on the flank of the enemy and began a day-long fight with the 502 Local Force Battalion and local guerillas. This action again highlighted the tenacity, professional competence and aggressiveness of the elite VNM Battalion. The Vietnamese Marines accounted for the majority of the day's kill and took the heaviest losses themselves. RAD 112 supported the ground maneuver from the waterway while taking several RR/B-40/AW hits throughout the day and night.

RAD 111 was also taken under fire enroute to 3rd/47th Infantry Battalion beaches on the Rach Ruong. The troops were successfully placed ashore and the River Assault Craft continued to provide close support to the Battalion throughout the action. Two USN personnel were KIA and 68 wounded during the action.

As a deception measure, the MRB delayed relocation until the boats were in the area of operation. At 040630H, the MRB got underway from Dong Tam escorted by ASPBs. Use of the ASPBs reduced the transit time considerably. H&I fires were conducted by the MRF ships during the first phase of the transit. Upon arrival in the objective area, DEFCON II was set and maintained to counter the increased threat to the MRB in this area.

During the afternoon of 5 December, RAD 112 backloaded the 5th VNM Battalion and returned to Dong Tam to allow the Battalion to re-organize and obtain replacements for the KIA/WIA losses.

RADs 111 and 91 continued to support the Infantry in the objective area during 5 and 6 December. Units were backloaded commencing PM 5 December and completed in the afternoon of 6 December.

The MRF relocated to the vicinity of the junction of the Song Tien Giang and Co Chien Rivers AM 6 December without incident.

This highly successful operation rendered yet another VC haven area unsafe for the enemy and added substantially to GVN/US presence in the Delta. Enemy KIA, WIA, and captured weapons and material were as shown in Tables 1-3.

PACVs of COSDIV 17 arrived at Vung Tau on 4 December and flew to Dong Tam the same day without incident. Delta operation and shakedown training was commenced 8 December at Dong Tam.

Subsequent phased Coronado IX operations were not as lucrative in terms of enemy KIA as the 4-6 December. However, continuing combat pressure and area denial was maintained by conducting riverine strike operations during the periods of 9-11 and 14-16 December in the Cam Son Secret Zone, Cai Be, and Giao Duc Districts and the 470 Base Area.

Table 1. Enemy captures.

VC KIA (BC)	266
VC WIA	1
VC PW	8
Detainees	108 (Incl PW)

Table 2. VC Weapons captured.

3	B-40 Rockets	11	Russian Rifles
2	BAR	1	Revolver
7	AK-47	5	Colt K-54s
15	M-1 Carbines	1	Handmade Pistol
2	M-1 Rifles	1	Colt BA-38
1	Thompson SMG	1	English Sniper Rifle w/scope
3	Chicom Carbines	1	0.45 Cal Pistol
1	U.S. Carbine	1	M-60 M.G.
16	Claymore Mines	182	Grenades
15	Land Mines	5	AP Mines

Table 3. VC Material captured and installations destroyed.

1	PRC-10 Radio	8	B-40 rounds
72	U.S. Magazines	10	U.S. Maps
35	Pounds of Documents	10	Lbs. Dental Equipment
5,000	Rounds SA Ammo		Small amount of clothing
5,000	Pounds of rice	2	Small Medical Caches
161	Bunkers	6	Command structures
126	Sampans		

The Warrior's Code of Honor

To the readers of *River Currents*, the following is an outreach to those of us who experienced combat—in whatever campaign we fought in—knowing that in so doing we became a part of a very select group of Veterans with that experience. "The Warrior's Code of Honor" was written by Paul Allen—a still surviving Korean Army Veteran—who felt the need to express his feeling and experiences by writing the Code. The following is an excerpt of the first opening paragraphs of the Code.

As a combat veteran wounded in one of America's wars, I offer to speak for those who cannot. Were the mouths of my fallen front-line friends not stopped with dust, they would testify that life revolves around honor.

In war it is understood that you give your word of honor to do your duty—that is—stand and fight instead of running away and deserting your friends.

When you keep your word despite desperately desiring to flee the screaming hell all around, you earn honor.

Earning honor under fire changes who you are.

The blast furnace of battle burns away impurities encrusting your soul.

The white-hot forge of combat hammers you into a hardened, purified warrior willing to die rather than break your word to friends—your honor.

I was first made aware of the Code about a year ago. I actually received it from Paul himself as he reached out to Department Commanders in the Military Order of the Purple Heart as a means of distributing its message. When I read it, light bulbs went off like crazy in my mind that helped me put my post-Vietnam life in context. I hope that in bringing the Code to you that it in some way does the same. I highly encourage all of you combat Veterans to read the Code and you can access the full text by going to <http://www.warriorscodeof-honor.com/>.

I and others helped Paul create the web site, and you will notice upon entering it, that there is a section for comments. The Code is currently being used by various VA hospitals and PTSD professionals in helping those afflicted. The Code is being presented here in the *River Currents* as a means to further distribute it to those that might find benefit. In reading it, if you feel the need to inform others that may benefit from reading it too, then please feel free to pass the link on.

Yours in Patriotism, **Pete Oakander**
RM3 RivRon 13 C-131-1 (05/69-05/70), Commander of Chief Joseph Chapter 509 of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Boise, Idaho. Any questions contact me at poakander@msn.com.

Plan of the Day for the 2013 Reunion

Opening and closing of the individual hospitality rooms will be up to the different units. Liberty Hall Hospitality Room will be open 7 a.m. daily and is open to all hands. Beverages and snacks will be available. Closing time will vary. Be sure to wear your name tag at all times to receive a 10% discount on all meals eaten in the hotel's restaurant. The hotel will furnish a shuttle service to the Castleton Square Mall. Check with the main desk for the schedule.

Thursday, August 29, 2013

7:00 a.m. Liberty Hall Hospitality Room open
9:30 a.m. Registration hosted by George Duke Marthenze and his staff (setup outside Liberty Hall)
9:30 a.m. Product sales hosted by Chet Gunner Stanley and his staff
10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MRF and 9th Inf Division Museum Room hosted by Bob Pries and his staff (Salons A and B)
Raffle tickets available from Mable Springer (Raffle Queen) and her staff

Friday, August 30, 2013

7:00 a.m. Liberty Hall Hospitality Room open
9:30 a.m. Registration
9:30 a.m. Product sales
10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MRF and 9th Inf Division Museum Room
7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Delta to DMZ dance with a DJ playing your favorites of the '60s and '70s music held in the Grand Ballroom. Board Member Frank Jones and wife Linda will be hosting the dance. No dress code.

Saturday, August 31, 2013

7:00 a.m. Liberty Hall Hospitality Room open
10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Liberty Hall
Speakers: Padre Ray Johnson RivFlot 1 (01/67-01/68) and Maj Bob Bischoff USA (Ret.) Company Commander A Co 4th/47th (07/67-07/68)
Master of Ceremonies Gunners Chet Stanley and Don Blankenship
Memorial services conducted by Chaplain LtCol Jim Johnson U.S. Army (Ret) 3rd/60th and Captain Richard MacCullagh U.S. Navy (Ret) ComRivFlotOne Staff
Flags and certificates will be presented to widows and sons and daughters who attend the reunion of our fallen Brothers from Vietnam and those who have passed on since Vietnam. Gunner Chet Stanley assisted by Don Blankenship will do the honors.
Missing Man Ceremony by Dave Schoenian C Co 4th/47th
Roy Moseman will render the playing of Taps.
Noon to 2:00 p.m. Product sales
1:00-2:30 p.m. MRFA Deli Buffet Lunch (Atrium)
3:00 p.m. Raffle
3:30 to ? Visiting with shipmates, family, and friends

Sunday, September 1, 2013

Check out

REUNION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

comprehensive. Fees and deposits may not include tax and are subject to change.

The MRFA guests are exempt for the fee for in-room high-speed Internet (wired and wireless).

Handicap Home Health Depot

Scooters: To rent a handicap scooter, contact Kathy or Paula at Home Health Depot (317-347-6400). The requirement is a \$400 deposit and the scooter will be delivered to the hotel. If there are no damages to the scooter, the rate upon return will be \$150 for rental, delivery, and pick-up for the dates of August 28-September 1, 2013. The MRFA is not responsible for the delivery of the scooter or the payment.

Individual Hospitality Rooms: If a group would like a Hospitality Room, contact Stephanie Linton, Sales Manager (317-322-3716 ext. 1274, linton@indy-marriotteast.com). The rate is \$125 per day.



Stephanie mentioned to book the hospitality rooms quickly.

Buffet Lunch, Saturday, August 31, 2013, 1300-1430: Marriott Deli \$10.00 per Person. Chef's Freshly Prepared Soup; Selection of (2) Salads (House Made Kettle Chips and Dip; All American Garden Salad; Spring Mix Garden Salad; Classic Caesar Salad; Tortellini Pasta Salad; Red Skin Potato Salad; or Creamy Cole Slaw), Sliced Premium Roasted Top Round of Beef; Roasted Turkey Breast;

Hickory Smoked Ham; and Genoa Salami; Assorted Fresh Deli Style Breads and Buns; Cheddar, Swiss, Pepper Jack, and Provolone Cheese; Sliced Tomatoes; Crisp Lettuce Leaves; Sliced Red Onions; Kosher Pickle Spears; and Assorted Condiments; Chef's Selection of Assorted Desserts; Coffee; and Unsweetened Iced Tea.

To provide the complimentary transportation to and from the airport on a prearranged scheduled basis, fill out the 2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Information Form and send to Lindsay Smart as indicated on the form.

Note: You will still have to check in at the registration desk to receive your name tag.

If you wait and pay your registration fee at the reunion, the late

registration fee will be \$65. Register early and help the MRFA as we use your fees to purchase food, beverages, and other items.

To those few who always try and get by without paying the Registration Fee and want a free ride, this is not honoring your fellow members and their spouses.

If you have any questions, contact Albert at mrfa@bellsouth.net, Charlie Ardinger at mrfamembership@mabeltel.coop, or Gunner Stanley at gunnerstan@aol.com.

*Thanks for your support in our great association. **Albert Moore, MRFA President***



Lindsay Smart

2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Information Form

(NOTE: Flight info due 2 weeks prior to arrival to get on the hotel shuttle.)

For the Indianapolis Marriott East hotel to provide complimentary transportation to and from the Indianapolis International Airport on a prearranged scheduled basis, fill out the Flight Information Form. We may have a few changes on the transportation schedules. We will keep you updated in the *River Currents* and our web site www.mrfa.org prior to the reunion. The airport is about 16 miles from the hotel and the cost per taxi runs around \$45 or \$50.

Name(s): _____

Cell Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date	Airline	Flight Number	Arrival time INTO Indianapolis Airport	Number of People Needing Ride from Indianapolis Airport
Date	Airline	Flight Number	Arrival time DEPARTING Marriott East Hotel	Number of People Needing Ride to Indianapolis Airport

Send this form back to Lindsay Smart by e-mail smartl@indy-marriotteast.com; fax to Lindsay Smart at 317-352-9775; or mail to Lindsay Smart, Event Manager, Indianapolis Marriott East, 7202 E 21st St, Indianapolis, IN 46219, ATTN: 2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Info. If you e-mail this form, you will receive a confirmation e-mail back within 3 days of arrival as to what your pick up times will be. If flights are delayed, call 317-352-1231 when you get into the Indianapolis airport and they will get you on the next shuttle.

MRFA Reunions and Gatherings

- 1992 1st Mobile River Task Force 117 Reunion, Days Inn, Hickory, NC, April 2-5
 1993 2nd MRFA Reunion, Chattanooga Choo Choo Holiday Inn, Chattanooga, TN, July 8-11
 1994 MRFA Planning Meeting, The Galt House, Louisville, KY, May 27-29
 1995 3rd MRFA Reunion, The Galt House, Louisville, KY, June 22-25
 1995 Vietnam Memorial and the US Navy Memorial Foundation and the MRFA salutes the U.S. Navy's TF 117 and the US Army 2nd Bridge of the 9th Infantry, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 1996 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Drawbridge Inn, Fort Mitchell, KY, July 11-14
 1996 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 1997 4th MRFA Reunion Drawbridge Estates, Fort Mitchell, KY, June 26-29
 1997 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 1998 MRFA Reunion, Best Western Hanalei Hotel, San Diego, CA, June 25-28
 1998 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 1999 5th MRFA Reunion, Drawbridge, Moving Wall, Fort Mitchell, KY, July 2-4
 1999 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2000 MRFA Day's Inn/Airport by the Mall of America, Minneapolis, MN, May 25-29 with the Mobile Riverine Force Dedication at Fort Snelling, MN, May 27
 2000 Vietnam Memorial and the U.S. Navy Memorial for a plaque dedication, Veterans Day, November
 2001 6th MRFA Reunion, Fort Mitchell, KY, June 28-30
 2001 Mobile Riverine Force paver at Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial, Rochester, MN, September
 2001 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2002 7th MRFA Reunion, for dedication of the CCB-18, Red Lion Hanalei Hotel, San Diego, CA, June 27-30
 2002 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Minneapolis, MN, Veterans Day, November 7-9
 2002 Vietnam Memorial Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2003 8th MRFA Reunion, Drawbridge Estates Inn, Fort Mitchell, KY, August 28-31
 2003 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Days Inn, Bloomington, MN, Veterans Day, November 6-9
 2003 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2004 MRFA, Gathering of the Troops, Ramada Inn Airport and Thunderbird Convention Center, Bloomington, MN, Veterans Day, November 12-14
 2004 Vietnam Memorial, Quality Hotel, Arlington, VA, Veterans Day, November
 2005 MRFA Board Meeting, Adams Mark Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, June
 2005 9th MRFA Reunion, Drawbridge Estates Inn, Fort Mitchell, KY, September 1-4
 2005 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Ramada Inn Airport and Thunderbird Convention Center, Bloomington, MN, Veterans Day, November
 2005 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2006 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Adams Mark Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, May 4-6
 2006 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2007 10th MRFA Reunion, Adams Mark Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, August 30-September 2
 2007 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2008 MRFA and 9th Infantry Meeting, Adam's Mark, Indianapolis, IN, June 12-14
 2008 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Ramada Inn Airport and Thunderbird Convention Center, Bloomington, MN, Veterans Day, November
 2008 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2009 11th MRFA Reunion, Adams Mark Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, September 2-6
 2009 Vietnam Memorial, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2010 Vietnam Memorial and the US Navy Memorial Foundation, Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2011 12th MRFA Reunion, Wyndham Hotel, Indianapolis, IN, August 30-September 1
 2012 MRFA Board Meeting, Indianapolis Marriott East, June 14-16
 2012 MRFA Gathering of the Troops, Crowne Plaza Hotel, San Diego, CA, September 6-9
 2012 Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November
 2013 13th MRFA Reunion, Indianapolis Marriott East, Indianapolis, IN, August 28-September 1
 2013 Veterans Day, Washington, DC, November

2013 Reunion Registration Form

Mobile Riverine Force Association
 Indianapolis Marriott East
 7202 East 21st Street, Indianapolis, IN

August 28 to September 1, 2013

Name _____

Unit in Vietnam _____ Dates _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ or Cell _____

E-mail _____

Name(s): Spouse/Guest(s) _____ City _____ State _____

☐ No spouse/girlfriend or guests

☐ Send my registration form to me by e-mail

REGISTRATION FEE _____ \$50

*Cost includes member and spouse/girlfriend
 (Does not cover lodging, food, bus trips, or shuttles)*

Total number of other guest(s) (____ x \$15 each) _____

Registration fee for Nonmember (\$65) _____

Saturday afternoon buffet (number of people ____ x \$10) _____

Late registration fee (\$65) _____

Grand total enclosed \$ _____

When filling out the form, be as accurate and clear as possible. Use one unit and one date, even if you have served in more than one unit.

Please send this form with your check or money order (payable to MRFA or Mobile Riverine Force Association) before August 16, 2013, to MRFA 2013 Reunion, 1857 County Road A14, Decorah, IA 52101.

There will be a \$25 charge for all returned checks.

Cancellations prior to the reunion will be charged a \$10 processing fee.

9th Infantry Division Artillery Has a Proud History

1st Battalion, 11th Artillery (105 mm)

First organized at Camp Harry S. Jones, Douglas, Arizona. The 1st Battalion 11th Artillery served with the 6th Division in the province of Loraine, France, during World War 1.

The unit's original armament was a horse-drawn 4.7-inch howitzer. The regiment was motorized in January 1918, sailed to England in July, and fired its first round at the enemy in October.

From June 1919 to January 1921, the unit was in the United States. After that the unit was relocated to Hawaii until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The regiment was reorganized into the 11th Field Artillery Battalion, 90th Artillery Battalion, and the 24th Division Artillery Headquarters in October 1941.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor until August 1943, the battalion manned batteries of 155- and 250-mm howitzers as part of the tactical defense of Oahu. In August 1943, the battalion

underwent a strenuous training program in preparation for jungle fighting. The 1st/11th was attached to the 38th Division Artillery in January 1945, and conducted operations on several islands while moving toward Japan from Bataan, Parang Harbor, Talmo, and LeYte Island.

The unit owns battle honors commemorating the Meuse-Argonne, Central Pacific, New Guinea, Luzon, LeYte, and Southern Philippines. The unit also served in the Korean Conflict where the unit was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation. Again it was deactivated until February 1, 1966, where the 1st/11th was reactivated at Fort Riley, Kansas. Arrived in Vietnam 1 January 1967.

Departed Vietnam 14 August 1969

Previous Station Fort Riley, Kansas

Authorized Strength 468 (1968)

The 1st Battalion 11th Artillery ("Dragon Regiment") was a towed 155-mm howitzer battalion providing direct artillery support to

Division Artillery

HQ and HQ Battery, 9th Infantry Division Artillery
 2nd Battalion, 4th Artillery (105 mm)
 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery (105 mm)
 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery (105 mm; Riverine)
 1st Battalion, 84th Artillery (155 mm)
 Battery C, 5th Battalion (AW; SP), 2nd Artillery (40-mm "Dusters")
 6th Battalion, 77th Artillery
 Battery H (Searchlight), 29th Artillery
 3rd Battalion 11th Field Artillery

Can Giuoc 69 2/4th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Fels 68 1/11th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Gettysburg 69 2/4th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Jaeger 68 1/11th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Klaw 68 3/34th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Lambert 68 1/11th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Ludwig 69 2/4th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Machete 67 3/34th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Moore 68 1/11th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Mud 68 1/11th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Shiloh 69 2/4th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ
 Winchester 68 3/34th FA, 9th ID, III CTZ

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

MRF Summary Report – July 1969

**Mobile River Force Summary
ComRivFlotOne/ComRivSupprn—
Seven Command History
(Taken from Don Blankenship
River Vet Web Site)**

The dimension and tempo of MRF operations were substantially reduced in July as the 2nd Brigade of the 9th Division assumed a stand down in preparation for their scheduled redeployment. Except for a series of 3rd Brigade operations, supported by seven river assault craft, in the Can Giouc District of Long An Province, primary emphasis on MRF activity was directed toward local operations with the 1st Brigade in defense of the military installation at Dong Tam. RAC also supported several operations in Kien Hoa Province involving Vietnamese Army, Regional Forces, and Provincial Reconnaissance Units, in addition to the usual escort, burn/defoliation, and MEDCAP missions.

Contact with the enemy was extremely light as shown by the drastic decline in enemy KIAs, down to 63. Of the 11 hostile fire incidents reported, only 4 were enemy initiated firefights. These low figures evidently reflect a reduction in both MRF and enemy activities.

The final official ceremony of the Mobile Riverine Force was held at 1500 on 6 July on the flight deck of the flagship, USS Benewah (APB-35) as the Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to the 2nd Brigade and River Assault Flotilla One for the MRF's outstanding actions during the period 29 January to 4 March 1968 at the time of the Tet Offensive. General William D. Rossen, Deputy Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, presented the awards. The ships and assault craft of Task Force 117 then passed in review to conclude the ceremony.



**Presidential Unit Citation USS Benewah/2nd Bde
July 1969. Photo courtesy of Robert Zinn Crew
Member USS Benewah**

The 3/60th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade of the U.S. Army 9th Division departed on 8 July and was the first MRF unit to be redeployed in connection with the 25,000 man reduction announced by President Nixon.

Task Force 117 provided 5 ASPBs on 26 July to CTG 116.3 (Central Delta Patrol Group) in temporary support of river patrol duties on the My Tho and Ham Luong Rivers.

A new RAC numbering system is in effect whereby all craft of a class are assigned a different number,

as opposed to the former divisional numbering system, i.e., A-1 designates ASPB number 1, Z-4 is Zippo number 4, etc.

Sixteen ASPBs, formerly assigned to CTF 116 and utilized in a patrol capacity as River Division 595 were transferred to CTF 116 during July. The division organization and boat strength of TF 117 during July is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The division organization and boat strength of TF 117.

	River Assault Squadron 13		River Assault Squadron 15			
Craft	RAD 131	RAD 132	RAD 151	RAD 152	RAD 153	Totals
ATC	15	13	13	13	0	54
ASPB	6	6	6	6	16	40
Monitor	3	3	3	3	0	12
CCB	2	1	1	1	0	5
Refueler	0	1	0	1	0	2
Totals	26	24	23	24	16	113

River assault craft employment on 23 July as shown in Table 2 is illustrative of the variety of activities that RAC were committed during the month.

Table 2. River assault craft deployment.

Activity/Operation	ATC	ASPB	Monitor	CCB	Refueler	Totals
Aqua snipers	3	2			1	6
Base Defense (Note 1)	11	2				13
U.S. 9th Defense	18	8	4 (1 Z)	2	1	33
Can Giouc Operations	3	2	2 (1 Z)	1		8
Operations Giant Slingshot	13	12	5 (2 Z)	2		32
Rung Sat Special Zone	1	7	1 (1 Z)			9
OVHL/CASREP	5	6				11
Upkeep		1				1
Totals	54	40	12 (5 Z)	5	2	113

Note: 3 MSM also committed to base defense and (Z) Zippo, flame thrower configured monitor

Operations in Kien Hoa Province

In comparison with previous months, MRF activity in Kien Hoa Province was limited during July. The former aggressive search and clear operations conducted throughout the province were absent as the 2nd Brigade stood down, and the main effort became defensive as RAC supported the 6/31 Infantry Battalion of the 1st Brigade in local security operations near Dong Tam and along the Kinh Xang that were designated to protect the base from enemy attack. These local operations consisted of troop insertions, sweeps, and extractions supported by RAC. The ships of the MRF added their firepower to Dong Tam defense by providing frequent H&I fire into the area bordering the southern perimeter of the base. Night sniper and interdiction patrols were also carried on nightly as part of the base defense measures. Navy aqua snipers and 6/31 sniper teams accounted for 10 VC killed

during the patrols along the banks of the My Tho River near Dong Tam and the Mobile Riverine Base.

RAC supported 4 Kien Hoa Province RF and 3 PRU operations along the Co Chien, Cai Mon, and Ba Lai Rivers during the last 10 days of the month. The RFs and PRUs gained contacts on several occasions and accounted for 28 VC killed and 20 captured.

During the last 8 days of July, RAC on patrol duties and those in blocking stations after troop insertions inspected 924 sampans resulting in 24 detained.

Dong Tam Base and the Mobile Riverine Base were again subjected to rocket/mortar fire during the month. At 1605 on the 10th, Dong Tam received a single 107-mm rocket that impacted less than 50 feet from the in/out processing center at Dong Tam resulting in three USA killed, and 18 USA and 3 USN wounded. The next night at 2112, Dong Tam received incoming mortar. USS Nueces (APB-40) and USS Satyr (ARL-23) took the suspected VC positions on the south bank of the My Tho River under fire immediately with unknown results. A 1st Brigade helo search team

was called in to recon the area. They sighted 3 sampans, took them under fire and sunk them. No signs of enemy activity were evident at first light

the following morning as the RIVFLOTONE Command and Control helo reconned the area. Again on 16 July at 2158, units of the MRB at Dong Tam observed 5 to 7 rockets fired from the south bank of the My Tho toward the Dong Tam Base and the MRB. Two of these landed in the water near the MRB without causing

damage. USS Tom Green County (LST-1159) reported swimmers in the area in the same general vicinity as the suspected launch sight. All ships returned fire and base defense boats dropped grenades in the area of the suspected swimmers. No friendly casualties were sustained and enemy casualties are unknown.

The first ENIFF of the month occurred on 13 July when ATC 30 and 47 came under automatic weapons and AK-47 fire from the north bank of the My Tho 3 miles southwest of Dong Tam while conducting night patrol and sniper operations. The RAC and snipers returned and suppressed the enemy fire with small arms. There were no friendly casualties and enemy casualties were unknown.

The Navy Command and Control helo, with Captain Carvel Blair, COMRIVFLOTONE aboard, received small arms fire from the south bank of the

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

SUMMARY REPORT - JULY 1969

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

My Tho during a reconnaissance flight on the afternoon of 16 July. No hits were sustained. The helo returned fire and Dong Tam artillery placed a strike into the area. Monitor 4 was dispatched to investigate and later a Navy EOD team entered the area in Boston whalers and towed out two damaged sampans.

During sniper patrol operations along the My Tho, ATCs 13 and 48 ran aground on a mudflat 1½ miles southwest of Dong Tam at 2330 on the night of 16 July. An underwater explosion blew a 12-inch hole in the stern of ATC 13 as it attempted to back full and caused minor flooding. ATC 5 went to assist and experienced six small underwater detonations before pulling T 13 free at 0330. The explosions were evaluated as caused by discarded friendly ordnance or detonators.

ATC 5, on base defense patrol on the My Tho River received about 10 rounds of small arms fire from the north bank of the My Tho during the early afternoon of 17 July. ATC 8 was dispatched to recon the area and had negative results. The 6/31 Infantry moved troops into the area to investigate the incident.

Beginning at 0700 on July 21, RAS 13 with 2 ASPBs, 16 ATCs, 3 Monitors, and 2 CCBs conducted a show of force and 2 MEDCAPS in areas that RAC had not entered since the stand down of the 2nd Brigade. MEDCAPS were conducted at Ap Hoa An and Ap Cho villages along the Ben Tre River; the RAC fired weapons into two areas along the south bank of the Ben Tre and later proceeded 4 miles into the western Bai Lai River and reconned both

banks by fire. The LHFT accompanying the RAC accounted for 3 VC killed, 3 structures destroyed and 4 damaged and 1 VC flag destroyed.

River assault craft of TE 117.1.6.2 inserted two Kien Hoa Province Regional Force companies on the north bank of the Co Chien River at 0930 on 27 July, and the RAC established blocking stations. The RFs shortly came into contact with an unknown size VC force and accounted for 17 killed, 10 captured, and 3 wounded. One RF troop was killed. RAC in blocking stations checked 200 personnel in 60 sampans. The RFs were extracted at 1630. On the same day, elements of "E" Company of the 6/31 Infantry Battalion also came into contact with 10 to 15 VC while operating along the Rach Cam 8½ miles southwest of Dong Tam. One VC was reported killed by troopers and one by the air cover.

A possible enemy mining attempt against ships of the MRB was thwarted at 2133 on the night of 21 July. ATC 17, while on base defense on the My Tho River, spotted debris about 200 yards from the stern of the USS Benewah (APB-35). A crewman fired into the debris with a shotgun and a large explosion erupted in a water spout 60-70 feet high. Concussion grenades were then dropped with no further results. No damage sustained by U.S. craft.

At 0730 on 31 July, while inserting troops of the 6/31 Infantry Battalion on the My Tho River, two ATCs received about 12 rounds of automatic weapons fire. The fire was returned with M-16. There were no friendly casualties. The RAC then established blocking stations and checked 26 sampans. Six detainees were later taken to Dong Tam.

Operations in Long An Province

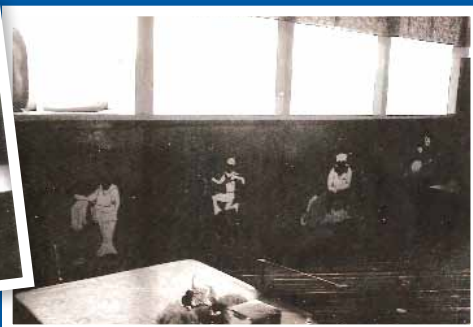
A detachment of 7 RAC conducted troop lift and waterborne blocking services in conjunction with the 3/7th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Brigade, U.S. 9th Division in the Can Giuoc District of Long An Province during the month. Ground contact was generally light as RAC supported day and night ambush and interdiction operations in the area during the periods 5-9, 13-19, and 22-31 July.

At 0920 on 6 July, RAC received enemy sniper fire during a beach prep and bunker destruction operation prior to insertion of troops on the Rach Gia, 2 miles northeast of Can Giuoc no friendly casualties were sustained and one enemy bunker complex was destroyed by flame. Troops were extracted at 1520.

An ENIFF erupted at 2115 on 14 July as the enemy attacked assault craft with recoilless rifle, B-40, small arms, and 0.50 caliber machine gun fire. RAC were enroute on the Rach Ba Dang, 4½ miles east of Can Giuoc to insert 3/7th Infantry Battalion ambush platoon when the firefight started. ATC 45 received a recoilless rifle hit and ATC 46 took a B-40 rocket hit. Four sailors were wounded, all minor, and the two RAC received minor damage. Firing runs were made on the enemy positions and the area was flamed down. Low tidal conditions precluded troop landings but artillery and air strikes were called in. Enemy casualties were unknown. The only other incident involving RAC occurred on 27 July when RAC, while waiting to backload troops, took a sampan under fire 2½ miles southwest of Can Giuoc resulting in one VC killed.



Mess Deck VC Hill just awarded the Nye Award for the best small mess in the country in November 1968



December 4, 1967, Riverine Force Surrounds Viet Cong Battalion

Elements of the U.S. Mobile Riverine Force and 400 South Vietnamese in armored personnel carriers engage communist forces in the Mekong Delta. During the battle, 235 of the 300-member Viet Cong battalion were killed. The Mobile Riverine Force was an Army-Navy task force made up of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division (primarily the 2nd Brigade and associated support troops) and the U.S. Navy's Task Force 117. This force was often combined with units from the South Vietnamese 7th and 21st Infantry Divisions and the South Vietnamese Marine Corps. The Mobile Riverine Concept called for Army troops to operate with Navy gunboats and troop carrier boats in the Mekong Delta. This gave the force the capability to travel 150 miles in 24 hours and launch combat operations within 30 minutes after anchoring. The Mobile Riverine Force was activated in June 1967. It conducted operations throughout the Delta until the responsibility for this mission was transferred to the South Vietnamese forces in April 1971, as part of the "Vietnamization" program. More on the battle on page 6.



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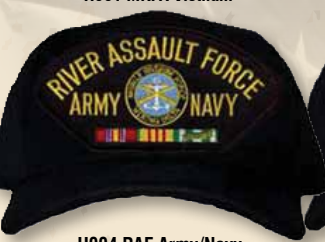
H001 MRFA Vietnam



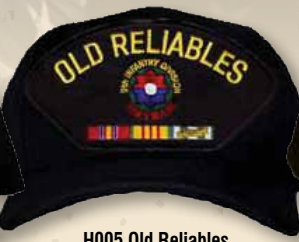
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Widow's Village: VC Graveyard TET 1968

2nd Mechanized Battalion 47th/Infantry

That morning (January 31st) a lot of people seemed to be involved in containing all the VC/NVA that were holed up in Widow's Village right next to our compound. I really don't think we were their main objective since we were a pretty small compound. I am sure they could have overrun us easily if they had wanted to. The VC/NVA had been in the village for a month or so from what I understand/building up supplies and soldiers to hit Bien Hoa, Long Binh and Saigon. They were all over the place and the 1968 TET holiday truce was their cover.



Widow's Village from road

Widow's Village was a small hamlet of shacks sitting just across the dirt road from the huge Long Binh Army complex and the Headquarters for II Field Force Vietnam. Reportedly, widows and children of deceased ARVN soldiers lived there, existing on small government pensions. From time to time we paid them to fill sandbags at our compound.

During the night and early morning, gunships had shot up the village and got a lot of secondary explosions from some of the positions they rocketed. At 0800, Company B 4/39 Inf made a combat assault into the grass helicopter pad in a field opposite II FFV HQ. The LZ was hot; the unit quickly cleared the area and moved through the Widow's Village along with a mechanized

company and the recon platoon from 1st Platoon, Company B, 2/47th Inf (Mech), 9th Inf Division. They went through the village and encountered a battalion (augmented) of the 88th NVA Regiment and cleared it out at a heavy cost but prevented or delayed an enemy assault on the nearby II Field Forces Headquarters. More than 50 of the enemy perished in the heavy fighting at Widow's Village.

In The Line of Fire

My sergeant was SP5 Kenneth Casey from the northeast somewhere. He came and got me and said we were ordered to burn off some foliage from around the perimeter wire as the VC/NVA had been getting close to our perimeter and we needed to clear our fields of fire. We had tried to go out to the perimeter line a couple of times but the enemy ground fire was pretty intense and drove us back. He said we'd try it one more time but as the two of us went over the berm towards the wire Ken got hit. The bullet went through the top of his thigh and through his nuts and into his other leg. It didn't come out of the other leg but it had the skin pushed out. The trauma of the bullet must have locked his legs as he didn't go down. Instinctively I hit his legs from behind to get him down out of the line of fire. He was a really big guy and I wasn't and since we were alone I had to roll him quite a ways to get him down below the berm to safety. We called the medics and they patched him up and his war was over. (Note: SP5 Casey was really a great guy. He sent a letter back a couple months later saying he was doing good and thanked everyone. Fortunately, they were able to fix him up so he could still have kids.)

MSG Larry F. O'Neill

February 2, 1999 E-mail to MRFA President
Albert B. Moore

Al: Read the article on Widows' Village, January 31, 1968, on the MRFA web page. In



Mamma-sans from Widow's Village filling sandbags before TET '68 battle

the article, Platoon Sergeant Nelson Butler (Springfield, MO) tells of his platoon leader being killed and he had to assume the duties of platoon leader. Do you know who that LT was? I was that platoon leader and when I was dusted off, they all thought I was KIA but I made it. I was in surgery at the 24th Evac in Long Binh and later flown to the 8th Field Hospital where I spent several weeks and was later able to return to the 2/47.

But you know, those old wounds are catching up with this grunt. Some of those pains are back but that goes with the life of an infantryman.

Col Henry Jezek U.S. Army (Ret.),
Temple, Texas

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To all those who served on her as a crew member and made her their home away from home.

To the Boat Crews, Army Riverine Infantry, and Staff Personnel in Vietnam.

To those who lived on her during her years as a Barracks Ship in the Yards up and down the East Coast, and to those whom served on her in Newfoundland and Italy.

This was the last picture taken of her on her way to become a barrier reef off the coast of the Philippines. She was a good ship and a lot of good men served and lived on her and called her their home. I will always say this was not the way she should have left us or been treated. The Navy and our Country could have treated her much better by her like she treated those who served on her or lived onboard her throughout her career. May she rest in peace after all the years she gave to her Country. **Albert Moore CS1 (09/66-04/68)**



MRF Infantry Men in My Tho for Tet

By 1LT Joe C. Swayze, From The Old Reliable Newspaper Dec. 18, 1968

ABOARD THE USS BENEWAH—During 1968 the 9th Division's Mobile Riverine Force (MRF), the joint Army-Navy strike force operating the rivers and canals interlacing the Delta, killed almost 3,000 Viet Cong in formerly inaccessible areas deep in the Delta.

The 2nd Brigade MRF has employed three infantry battalions, 3d/60th, 3d/47th and 4th/47th, rotating them between the floating base and Dong Tam. Naval Task Force 117 operates the boats from which the 2nd Brigade maneuvers.

The 3d Battalion, 34th Artillery, supports floating and land fire support bases. Fighter bombers from the 7th U.S. Air Force and gunships and light observation helicopters from Troop D, 3d/5th Cavalry, 9th Aviation Battalion have provided air support to the brigade.

In early January, during Operation CORONADO IX, the MRF operated in Vin Long Province searching out main force VC battalions. During a single action in western Dinh Tuong Province on January 10, 47 VC were killed.

Midway through Operation CORONADO XVIII, the enemy launched the TET offensive, a massive coordinated attack against the principal cities of the Delta, the MRF immediately sent troops to relieve My Tho, Cai Lay, and Vin Long.



Jim Silva in Vietnam



Jim Today

Infantrymen from 3d/60th and 3d/47th moved to defend My Tho from four VC battalions. Thirty six hours later the MRF units had moved to Cai Lay and Vin Long to cut off the enemy operating there. In the first 12 days of TET, the MRF killed 345 VC.

On February 12, the MRF moved south to a new anchorage at Can Tho. During the rest of the month, the 3d/47th and the 3d/60th killed over 300 VC in operations conducted around that Delta city.

On April 4, in the vicinity of the Ba Lai River, elements of the 3d/47th and the 4th/47th beached and assaulted an estimated VC battalion. Eighty-five VC were killed as a result of the action. For the rest of April, in heavy contacts the MRF killed an additional 170 VC in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces.

During the third quarter of 1968, the 2d Brigade conducted several significant operations. In late July and early August, the MRF combined with the 5th Vietnamese Marine Battalion and penetrated the rugged U Minh Forest deep in the Delta. They killed 250 VC and uncovered 101 weapons in 9 days.

On September 15, Operation HOMSTEAD was initiated kicking off the Kien Hoa Campaign for the MRF. The campaign was characterized by many water-mobile and airmobile operations in conjunction with pacification efforts.

"Our first job was to eliminate the 516th main force VC battalion and relieve pressure



CLUSTERED—The USS Benewah, flagship for the joint Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force, is the home for the 9th Division's 2nd Brigade Headquarters. Tied up to the mother ship, Armored Troop Carriers and Assault Support Patrol Boats re-fuel and take on supplies before moving out on a new mission. (Information Office photo by 1LT Richard Robey)

from Ben Tre. We could then begin to upgrade the local Vietnamese forces and initiate serious pacification efforts," said Major Donald L. Morelli, 2d Brigade Operations Officer.

MEDCAP and ICAP teams leave daily for villages throughout the province to bring food and medical care. PSYOPS teams have dropped over nine million leaflets and have conducted over a hundred hours of loudspeaker air missions in October and November.

The MRF has enjoyed great success in presenting the South Vietnamese government's amnesty program. Over 100 Hoi Chanh came to the Chieu Hoi centers in Ken Hoa during October alone.

The MRF has accounted for 2,752 VC killed and detained 332 suspects and captured 632 weapons during the division's second year in Vietnam.

Article was sent to the RC Staff by Jim Silva D-3 4th/39th Inf 9th Inf Div

9TH INF DIV ARTILLERY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the 9th Infantry Division. It was first stationed at Bear Cat and in 1968 the unit was moved to Dong Tam where its support to the troops in the field was very effective.

2nd Battalion, 4th Artillery (105 mm)

The 2nd Battalion, 4th Artillery, which supported our Division infantrymen in the Mekong Delta, traces its history back to the early 19th century.

Some units destined to comprise the battalion were organized June 1, 1812, and were active in nearly every war the United States has fought. The unit was decorated many times and has been awarded 43 campaign streamers for fighting in the War of 1812, the Indian Wars, Mexican War of 1846, Civil War, Mexican War of 1916, and World War II.

The battalion's 20th century history involves three units—Battery D, 4th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA); Battery B, 4th Coastal Artillery; and headquarters Battery, 2nd Howitzer Battalion, 4th Field Artillery.

On January 28, 1958, the 4th AAA was consolidated with the 4th Coastal Artillery at Fort Bliss, Texas. Six months later the two units were combined to form Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Howitzer Battalion, 4th Field Artillery, at Fort Carson, Colorado. The

2nd/4th was reactivated and redesignated, 4th Artillery, on February 1, 1966, at Fort Riley. And advanced training before deploying to Vietnam.

Arrived Vietnam: 28 January 1967

Departed Vietnam: 11 October 1970

Previous Station: Fort Riley, Kansas

Authorized Strength: 468 (1968)

The 2nd Battalion of the 4th Artillery main weapon was a towed 105-mm howitzer battalion assigned to the 9th Infantry Division. Initially, in direct support of the 2nd Brigade, it was located at Tan An, when the 9th Infantry Division departed Vietnam. The battalion continued in direct support of the separate 3rd Brigade that remained at Tan An under the operational control of the 25th Infantry Division. The battalion then departed Vietnam along with the rest of the 3rd Brigade.

3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery (105 mm)

The first artillery unit to go afloat in the Vietnam War. The 3rd/34th has provided fast and accurate support of all MRF combat operations in the Mekong Delta.

First organized August 7, 1918, at Camp McClellan, Alabama, as Battery C, 34th Field Artillery, the unit was demobilized there in 1919. Ten years later, it was reconstituted and assigned to the 9th Infantry Division. The regiment was reorganized December 1, 1940, and served with the old Reliable throughout World

War II, winning battle honors in Tunisia, Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe. It was cited in The Order of the Day by the Belgian Army for action along the Meuse River and in the Ardennes.

After inactivation in 1946, the battalion was reactivated in 1948 at Fort Dix, New Jersey. In December 1, 1957, it was reorganized and redesignated Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Rocket Howitzer Battalion, 34th Artillery. It was allocated to the Army Reserve and assigned to the 103rd Division. The battalion was withdrawn from the reserves, allotted to the regular Army, redesignated 3rd/34th. Assigned to the 9th Infantry Division on February 1, 1966, at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Arrived Vietnam: 19 December 1966

Departed Vietnam: 26 July 1969

Previous Station: Fort Riley, Kansas

Authorized Strength: 468

The 3rd Battalion of the 34th Artillery was a towed 105-mm howitzer Battalion assigned to the 9th Infantry Division. This battalion was unique in that it was placed on barge-firing platforms to provide direct Artillery support to the division's Mobile Riverine operations. It was administratively stationed at Dong Tam. Arriving in Vietnam as direct support artillery

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

In Memory Of

This section is for members who wish to sponsor the MRFA by placing a notice in memory of one of their fallen comrades. In some instances, the name of the sponsor will precede the name of the person who was KIA, or has passed on since Vietnam. It's \$25 for four issues.

MajGeneral Lucien Bolduc, Jr. USA (Ret) for Guy Tutwiler
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Brothers of the 2nd/47th Inf for all Army and Navy KIAs
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Regina Gooden for Sgt Lloyd Earl Valentine B Co. 3rd/47th KIA 09/05/68
James Henke, Tony Spradling, Dave Nelson, James Callan, and the Band of Brothers for Sgt Gerald Thurman and Spec James B. Johnson, and all our Brothers lost on June 19, 1967, from A Co. 4th/47th 9th in AP BAC.
Joe Hilliard for Joe Benack from Florida and Donald Hartzell from Pennsylvania
Colleen Huber for Shawn Huber D Co.3rd/47th Inf (10/68-01/69)
Dave Justin for Tim Doty A Co 3rd/60th
Harry Kawamura for CPL Terry T. Kawamura MOH 173rd Airborne Bde KIA 03/19/69
John LeBorgne for Luis Mora KIA 02/02/67; Roy Littlehales, Gary Richards, Robert Vernes, Charles Lewis KIAs 02/16/67; Gerald Novak KIA 03/02/67; James Novotny, Oscar Nicewander, and Dennis Morrell KIAs 03/20/67; all from Co A 3rd/39th 9th Inf Div
OMen of C Co. 4th/47th 1967 for our Brothers KIA 03/19/67 Benito Alaniz; MIA 04/09/67 Ronald P. Schworer; KIA 04/13/67 Charles "Duffy" Black; KIA 05/15/67 Donald M. Peterson; KIA 06/19/67 Robert J. Cara, Robert J. Jindra, Timothy A. Johnson, Forrest L. Ramos, Cameron A. Rice, David A. Robin, Sheldon B. Schulman, Hubert J. Fink, Kenneth D. Frakes, William M. Geier, John L. Winters; KIA 07/11/67 Marion "Butch" Eakins, Elmer F. Kenney, Harold W. King, Philip A. Ferro, George E. Smith; KIA 07/29/67 Cecil B. Bridges; KIA 09/29/67 James M. Sunday; KIA 10/06/67 Gale A. Alldridge, Danny D. Burkhead, Charles W. Davis; KIA 11/10/67 Charles W. Grizzle; and KIA 05/06/68 John T. Hoskins
Kenneth R. Marple for brother SSGT Reece L. Marple B Co. 3rd/60th KIA 05/11/68
Adam Metts for Donald L. Bruckart T-111-2 KIA 03/31/69
A R "Monti" Montillo for William "Bulldog" McLaughlin B Co 3rd/60th KIA 10/03/68 and Barry "Butch" Copp B Co 3rd/60th KIA 10/28/68
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Jasper Northcutt for SSGT Henry T. Aragon B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/23/67, SGT James E. Boorman B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/27/67, SP4 James D. Bronakoski B-2 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67, SP4 Michael G. Hartnett B-2 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67, SGT William D. Mize B-2 2nd/47th and 5th/60th KIA 10/28/67, CPL Harold K. Southwick B-2 2nd/47th Inf KIA 03/02/67 (first KIA in B Co. 2nd/47th in Vietnam), and PFC Robert C. Voltz B-1 2nd/47th Inf (Mech) KIA 03/11/67 (first KIA 1st Platoon B Co. 2nd/47th in Vietnam)
Roy Pivey for my squad leader Charles "Chuck" Cataldo who fought the good fight in Vietnam, but lost the battle to cancer in November 2010
Chet "Gunner" Stanley for all the USN and USA KIAs of the MRF (1967-70)
Steven Totcoff for my brother CPL Dennis S. Totcoff B Co 3rd/47th 9th Inf Div KIA 5/2/68
Ken Sundberg for Michael David Sheahan 5th/60th KIA 02/25/68, Robert L. Conley 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68, and Glenn Dean Taylor 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68
Robert Sutton for LT James F. Rost Jr. Vin Te Canal Chau Duc KIA 11/69
Robert Thacker for SFC Earl T. Pelhan, Jr., 15th Eng, 9th Inf Div, KIA in Delta Lo
USS Guide MSO-447 for Shipmate and Brother Harold Foster
USS Westchester County sailors and soldiers killed and wounded in the mining on November 1, 1968
Ron and Judy Wallace for all those lost from 3rd/47th Inf
CPT Steve Williams for 2LT David George Williams Co. A 4th/47th KIA 09/21/67
David Wilson 2nd/60th KIA 08/05/69, Timothy Shelton 4th/39th KIA 06/25/69, Steven Murray 4th/39th KIA 05/26/69, Harvey Crabtree 2nd/4th Arty KIA 06/19/69, and Dennis Mattox 1st/501st 101st Abn KIA 08/23/69

9TH INF DIV ARTILLERY CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

for the division's 3rd Brigade before it was assigned to Riverine duties.

1st Battalion, 84th Artillery (155 mm)

The 1st Battalion, 84th Artillery has supported ground operations in the Delta and near Bear Cat with three 155-mm howitzer batteries and an eight-inch battery.

Constituted September 16, 1918, as Battery A 84th Field Artillery, the unit was demobilized 2 months later at Camp Sheridan, Alabama. It was activated July 1, 1936, redesignated Battery A, 84th Field Artillery, and assigned to the 9th Infantry Division.

The unit was deactivated November 1, 1946, in Germany after a successful tour in the European Theater with the 9th Division during World War II. It participated in the campaigns in Algeria/French Morocco, Tunisia, Sicily, Normandy, Northern France, the Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe. The 1st/84th won the Belgian Fourageré decoration in 1940 and was awarded Distinguished Unit Citations with streamers embroidered with the names Thala, Tunisia, and Remagen Bridgehead. The unit was cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action along the Meuse River and in the Ardennes.

On December 1, 1957, the 1st/45th was relived from assignment to the 9th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. It was redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Missile Battalion, 84th Artillery on June 2, 1958, and 20 days later was activated at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as a Corporal Missile

Unit. It was inactivated April 19, 1962, and reactivated February 1966.

Arrived Vietnam: 3 February 1967

Departed Vietnam: 16 August 1969

Previous Station: Fort Riley, Kansas

Authorized Strength: 616

The 1st Battalion of the 84th Artillery supplied general artillery support for the 9th Infantry Division at Bear Cat and later Dong Tam. It was a dual 155 mm towed howitzer and 8-inch self-propelled M-110 howitzer battalion. More information about the 1st/84th found at <http://15thengineer.50megs.com/>.

Battery H, 29th Artillery (Searchlight)

Arrived Vietnam: 24 March 1967

Departed Vietnam: 31 March 1972

Previous Station: Fort Still, Oklahoma

Authorized Strength: 1968 (150), 1970 (153)

Battery H of the 29th was a searchlight battery stationed at Can Tho. There it served with the 9th Infantry Division until it was assigned to II Field Force, Vietnam, in October 1967. The Battery was later attached to the 164th Aviation Group at Can Tho and remained there until leaving Vietnam.

"The primary force of the U.S. Army consists of the Combat Arms. The Combat Arms are comprised of the Field Artillery Branch, the Infantry Branch, and the Armor Branch. Of these three, the Field Artillery is known as the "King of Battle." In the history of modern warfare, it has always been the artillery that decided final victory on the battlefield. At the conclusion of WW II, General George S. Patton stated, "His army could not have been as successful as it was without the Field Artillery."

TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One

BM1 Wadie Marvin

Moore, U. S. Navy (Ret.) passed away January 9, 2003. "Boats" served on Swift Boats with TF-115 in 1967-1968. Following that tour of duty, Wadie served at Cat Lo with IUWG-1 from 1968 to 1969.

Paul E. Bellmore passed away May 30, 2004. He was on the USS Hickman County (LST-825) from 06/68 to 06/69. You may contact the family c/o Michael Bellmore, 5 Ingram St., Hamden, CT 06517-1835, 203-288-4014, mabellmore@gmail.com.

Grace Hagl passed away July 2012. Grace was the widow of BM1 Edward Hagl KIA 03/14/68 on the Quang Tri River. While serving as boat captain on Tangov112-7. You may contact the family c/o Ed Hagl Jr., 204 N Western Drive, Bozeman, MT 59718-2668.

Member **Capt Walter J. Riedemann** USN (Ret) passed away September 1, 2012. He was the CO of the USS Tom Green County

LST-1159 (1968-70). You may contact the family c/o Nancy Riedemann, 1341 Carolyn Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23451-5963; 757-491-2205.

LCDR Burton C Newby, CO of the USS Krishna from 2/70 to 2/71, passed away October 27, 2012; he was 87. As most river rats know, the USS Krishna tended the boats of TF-115 and TF-117. He was the CO when Krishna came under sapper attacks at Sea Float on July 5, 1970 and September 1, 1970.

Patrick M. Lawson Gunner's Mate 3rd Class passed away from cancer November 12, 2012. Patrick served at the Naval Support Activity Dong Tam from June 1967 to December 1969. May our brother rest in peace.

Steve Olson, HTC/DV, of TF-116 Game Wardens, has passed away in December 24, 2012. Steve was a Sat Diver and had earned the Silver Star in Vietnam. Steve was just 63.

Member **Richard E. Grambo** passed away January 1, 2013. Richard served in A Co 4th/47th (1967). You may contact the family c/o Angela Grambo, 11220 Clear Oak Cir, New Port Richey, FL 34654-1623. May our brother rest in peace.

Member **BMC James A. Brown Jr.** U.S. Navy (Ret.) passed away from cancer Agent Orange related January 29, 2013. Boats served as Boat Captain of Tango-131-2 (03/68-03/69). You may contact the family c/o Rosita S. Brown, PO Box 326431 Hagatna, Guam 96932-6007; jimrose@guam.net. Boats was a good man and a good sailor. May he rest in peace.

James C. Biggs passed away February 5, 2013. Jim served on the USS Tioga County LST-1158 (1965-67). You may contact the family c/o Sandra Biggs, 398 Mace Way, Lee, FL 32059-4872; 850-971-5140.

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